

Week Ending Friday, August 21, 1998

**The President's Radio Address**

*August 15, 1998*

Good morning. Two days ago, at Andrews Air Force Base, we welcomed them home: America's brave sons and daughters, carried under Stars and Stripes, flanked by the silent sentries of the honor guard. They had perished in Nairobi, cruelly and without warning, in an act of terror at the American Embassy. It was not the sort of homecoming any of us would have wished. But it was a tribute that befit their service to our Nation.

Hillary and I had the honor to meet with their families on the morning of the ceremony. They shared stories with us, stories and memories, showing us photographs. Their shoulders were heavy with sadness; their voices sometimes shook. But anyone could tell that their hearts were full of pride for the brave service of their loved ones and pride in the Nation they so ably and faithfully represented around the world. Collectively, over the course of their careers, these 12 men and women represented the United States in more than 20 countries across the globe, from Brazil to Botswana, from France to the Philippines, from South Korea to their final post, Kenya.

They represented America not simply by their deeds but by their character: by the quiet labors of a medical doctor, the careful diplomacy of a Foreign Service officer, the iron discipline of men and women in uniform. Their dedication to America was matched by their dedication to their families. In all these ways, they represented the best of our country. They showed the world our very best face and shared with its people our most cherished values.

As a nation, we have lost much. These families have lost even more. Words cannot describe and tributes cannot begin to fill the cruel vacancy left by evil acts of terror. But in the example of the proud and grieving families I met on Thursday, we find an em-

bodiment of American resolve. They made it clear to me they did not want us to give in to terror or to turn inward or retreat, for the world is full of promise, and they do not want us to try to stop resolving the misunderstandings that can deteriorate into the rot of hatred.

Instead, they urged us to stand strong, as ever, for freedom and democracy in all countries and for all people. And our administration will remain committed to the fight against terror. Over the last few years, working with Congress, we have passed tough new criminal penalties, tightened security at airports, strengthened protection of our troops overseas. We have created an international coalition to help us combat terrorism and have apprehended or helped to capture more than 40 terrorists abroad, including those involved in attacks on Pan Am Flight 830 and the World Trade Center and in the murder of two CIA employees in Virginia.

We must continue to lead the world toward peace, freedom, and prosperity. That is why our diplomats are on the job today around the world, working to ensure our national security, working to strengthen the global economy, working to bring peace to troubled regions, working often at risk to themselves. And that is why we now must work to rebuild our Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, to secure our Embassies and outposts around the world, to support our friends in Tanzania and Kenya as they rebuild.

This week, I have spoken with leaders in Congress, Republicans and Democrats alike. In the finest American tradition, they have pledged to join me in protecting America's presence throughout the world. Today we think especially of those serving in our diplomatic posts. I ask all our citizens to say a prayer for them and to express gratitude for their service. The spirit of the patriots who have dedicated or lost their lives to service is the spirit of America. They help to keep

our Nation strong and free, peaceful and proud, a powerful beacon of hope for the world.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

### **Statement on the Terrorist Bombing in Omagh, Northern Ireland**

*August 15, 1998*

Today's terrorist bombing in Omagh was a barbaric act intended to wreck Northern Ireland's aspirations for peace and reconciliation. On behalf of every American, I condemn this butchery and hope that the culprits will be brought to justice quickly. I extend our deep sympathy to those affected by this tragedy. I renew my pledge to stand with the people of Northern Ireland against the perpetrators of violence; they will find no friends here.

Now is the time for the parties of peace in Northern Ireland to redouble their efforts.

### **Address to the Nation on Testimony Before the Independent Counsel's Grand Jury**

*August 17, 1998*

Good evening. This afternoon in this room, from this chair, I testified before the Office of Independent Counsel and the grand jury. I answered their questions truthfully, including questions about my private life, questions no American citizen would ever want to answer.

Still I must take complete responsibility for all my actions, both public and private. And that is why I am speaking to you tonight.

As you know, in a deposition in January I was asked questions about my relationship with Monica Lewinsky. While my answers were legally accurate, I did not volunteer information. Indeed, I did have a relationship with Ms. Lewinsky that was not appropriate. In fact, it was wrong. It constituted a critical lapse in judgment and a personal failure on my part for which I am solely and completely responsible.

But I told the grand jury today, and I say to you now, that at no time did I ask anyone to lie, to hide or destroy evidence, or to take any other unlawful action.

I know that my public comments and my silence about this matter gave a false impression. I misled people, including even my wife. I deeply regret that. I can only tell you I was motivated by many factors: first, by a desire to protect myself from the embarrassment of my own conduct. I was also very concerned about protecting my family. The fact that these questions were being asked in a politically inspired lawsuit which has since been dismissed was a consideration, too.

In addition, I had real and serious concerns about an Independent Counsel investigation that began with private business dealings 20 years ago, dealings, I might add, about which an independent Federal agency found no evidence of any wrongdoing by me or my wife over 2 years ago. The Independent Counsel investigation moved on to my staff and friends, then into my private life. And now the investigation itself is under investigation. This has gone on too long, cost too much, and hurt too many innocent people.

Now this matter is between me, the two people I love most, my wife and our daughter, and our God. I must put it right, and I am prepared to do whatever it takes to do so. Nothing is more important to me personally. But it is private. And I intend to reclaim my family life for my family. It's nobody's business but ours. Even Presidents have private lives.

It is time to stop the pursuit of personal destruction and the prying into private lives and get on with our national life. Our country has been distracted by this matter for too long. And I take my responsibility for my part in all of this; this is all I can do. Now it is time—in fact, it is past time—to move on. We have important work to do, real opportunities to seize, real problems to solve, real security matters to face.

And so, tonight I ask you to turn away from the spectacle of the past 7 months, to repair the fabric of our national discourse, and to return our attention to all the challenges and all the promise of the next American century.